

DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 15, 2007

DSB BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Sharon Berry
Lori Hunter
James Johnson
Lindi Johnson
Nola McKinney
Irma Nelson

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT

Kara Aaron
Harold Brewer
Jim Hill

DSB BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

AER Representative (Vacant)

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT

AER Ex-officio (Vacant)
Ramona Sangalli

DHHS Representative: Steven Jones

Attorney General's Office Representative: None. (Erica Gee cannot attend due to prior commitment).

Governor's Office Representative: None

DSB Staff Present: Jim Hudson, Katy Morris, Coral Virden, Cortney Heslep, Jim Pearson, Donna Walker, Mary Cabaniss, Kandy Cayce, Chris McKenzie, Feona Barnett, Tanya VanHouten, Dorothy Brooks, Ginny McWilliams, Mary Douglas

CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Nola McKinney called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA. Chairman McKinney proposed that the agenda be amended to include the recently completed report on the results of the 2006 VR Consumer Satisfaction Survey. Motion was made by Mrs. Lindi Johnson to approve the agenda as amended. Mrs. Sharon Berry seconded the motion. ***Motion passed.***

INTRODUCTIONS. All persons in attendance introduced themselves. Chairman McKinney welcomed the RSA Review Team from Washington, D.C. and commended them for their valuable assistance to DSB.

APPROVAL OF 03/10/07 MINUTES. Motion was made by Mrs. Berry to approve the minutes as mailed. Mrs. Johnson seconded the motion. ***Motion passed.***

DSB DIRECTOR'S REPORT – DSB Director Jim Hudson expressed his appreciation to outgoing Board Chairman, Mrs. Lindi Johnson and her husband, Mr. Mark Johnson for their positive attitude, hard work and dependable service to DSB. He noted that he looks forward to the same relationship with the new DSB Board Chairman, Mrs. Nola McKinney and her husband, Mr. Fred McKinney.

RSA REVIEW – Mr. Hudson related that it had been a busy and productive week working with the RSA team, and the DSB staff members appreciate the supportive attitude of our Federal Partners. RSA representative, Mrs. Melodie Johnson thanked the board for scheduling arrangements to enable the Team to observe the June board meeting.

DSB FIELD MANAGER CHANGES - Certified Rehab Counselor Mrs. Tanya VanHouten has recently been promoted to Area Field Supervisor. She joins Ms. Chris McKenzie, former DSB Rehabilitation Teacher, who had been promoted to Area Field Supervisor last fall.

DHHS MANAGER CHANGES – Mr. Hudson expressed his appreciation to Mrs. Janie Huddleston, who has served DSB as one of the two DHHS Deputy Directors responsible for DSB and other designated agencies within the department for several years. Mrs. Huddleston has been helpful to us and committed to the Rehab process. She will be assuming responsibility for other divisions, following the retirement of Deputy Director Ray Scott. DSB is fortunate that Mr. Steven Jones, an eastern Arkansas businessman and former state representative, will assume the Deputy Director spot, including responsibility for DSB. Mr. Jones brings to the job a lot of knowledge about Human Services programs and other state and local services that will not only be helpful to the department but specifically to DSB. We look forward to working with Mr. Jones.

COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT - Under the board's direction we have completed the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment of consumers. DSB field and program supervisors Donna Walker, Dorothy Brooks, Tanya VanHouten, Kandy Cayce and Chris McKenzie are to be commended for the successful management of these events. Thanks also to board committee members Sharon Berry and Irma Nelson for designing the Needs Assessment.

VOC REHAB STATE PLAN AND STATE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING – At the Board's suggestion, DSB held a state plan public forum in each city in which a DSB office is located across the state, and experienced better consumer participation this year than in the recent past. DSB Plan Developer Ms. Kandy Cayce has been working diligently on the VR State Plan, as well as on the State Independent Living Plan (SPIL) completed jointly with our sister agency, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. A detailed discussion of the State Plans is scheduled later on the agenda.

WORKFORCE – We are still working as part of the Disability Subcommittee of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) to identify how the WIB can assist the local Workforce Centers throughout Arkansas to better serve persons with disabilities. The subcommittee includes representatives from General Rehab, DSB and the Client Assistance Program. Our opinion is that a lot of persons with disabilities are not getting to the workforce centers. We want to change that, and once they get there, change the outcomes that are happening in the workforce centers for our consumers.

DHHS – The Health Department will separate from DHHS July 1, 2007. We enjoyed having them in the department for the last two years, and learned a lot about how to work with them to get a wider array of services to all the citizens in the state. Health being a part of DHHS just assisted us in establishing new relationships with Health in the community, which is always good.

END OF DIRECTOR'S REPORT

CLIENT OF THE YEAR COMMITTEE REPORT - Committee Chairman Mr. James Johnson reported that he had obtained information from the states of Alabama and Hawaii regarding their Client of the Year processes. Mr. Johnson proposed that appropriate DSB staff be identified to serve the committee in pursuing timely development of this initiative. Mr. Johnson plans to have the criteria set and the project design ready for review and approval at the September Board meeting for immediate implementation. Mr. Hudson assigned Mrs. Katy Morris to staff the committee and to draw additional staff members as needed. It was suggested that the draft plan and details be mailed to the board members prior to the next board meeting to allow members time to prepare comments.

APPOINTMENT OF EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR COMMITTEE – The Board Chairman appointed Ms. Lori Hunter as Chairman of the Employee of the year committee. Mrs. Sharon Berry and Ms. Irma Nelson will also serve on the committee.

APPROVAL OF STATE PLAN – Ms. Kandy Cayce presented to the board Draft Copies of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living State Plans developed following the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The plans were the same as presented at the state plan public forum. Ms. Lori Hunter made a motion to approve the State Plan. Mrs. Sharon Berry seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the State Plan. **Motion Passed.** The State Plan is available on the DHHS/DSB website www.arkansas.gov/dhhs/dsb/NEWDSB/index.htm.

2007 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment – Ms. Kandy Cayce reported that there were at least 6 or 7 consumers at each Public Forum in addition to DSB staff, workforce staff, family members, and transportation providers. The expressed needs varied according to the age of the consumer attending the Public Forum. The Transition-age group reported more orientation and mobility needs. Transition consumers indicated public schools were not meeting their orientation needs, equipment needs and other needs. The Working-age group needed assistance in obtaining and retaining employment, raising employer awareness of ADA, and awareness of the capabilities of skills and training of people who are visually impaired and blind. The Older Blind group made transportation number one and instruction in homemaking skills number two on their needs hierarchy. Consumers were also given the opportunity to list “Other Services”, which they declared, including training and education, freedom from discrimination in employment, schools providing accommodation, public awareness in general, specific equipment needs and eye surgery.

DISABILITY RIGHTS REPORT (DRC) – No representative was present. No report was submitted.

ARKANSAS INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL REPORT (AILC) – No representative was present. A report was submitted with the board packet.

RECOGNITION OF PAST CHAIRMAN, MRS. LINDI JOHNSON – The board chairman presented a plaque to former Board Chairman, Mrs. Lindi Johnson in appreciation for her leadership and dedication serving as a Chairman and member of the Division of Services for the Blind Board from 1999 to 2007.

CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT – Mrs. Ginny McWilliams, Case Reviewer for DSB, gave a summary of the Vocational Rehabilitation Client Satisfaction Survey for FFY 2006. A total of 1,386 surveys were mailed to VR consumers in December 2006. The survey contained ten questions where consumers were asked to choose between strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. **The overall satisfaction rate was 92.22%.** A detailed report by each individual survey question is attached as a formal part of these minutes.

CONSUMER INPUT – Ms. Lori Hunter suggested that board members who represent DSB at the National Federation of the Blind Convention and American Council of the Blind Convention submit a written report of the Convention to the board. She also welcomed any suggestions from the board regarding printed materials or information that the representatives may bring back to present to the board. The board chairman proposed that consumer group representatives on the board who are authorized funding to attend various consumer conventions submit a written report to Ms. Coral Virden within two weeks after the convention. The convention reports will be distributed to the board prior to the September board meeting. The board voted unanimously to approve this proposal.

DSB Director introduced Mr. Steven Jones, DHHS Deputy Director, to the board.

Mr. Harold Brewer expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve as Ex Officio member of the DSB Board. His term will be ending soon when the new president of the Arkansas Association of Licensed Blind Business Enterprise Managers, Sandy Roland, takes office. The association president is also the Ex Officio member of the DSB Board. Mr. Brewer expressed his appreciation for serving on the board.

Mr. James Johnson noted that Habitat for Humanity will be building a house for a young man in Hot Springs who is legally blind and a paraplegic. His wife is also a paraplegic. If anyone would like to volunteer as a laborer please contact Mr. James Johnson.

Mr. James Johnson recently installed Mrs. Nola McKinney as President of her Lioness Club this year. This is her second term as president.

SCHEDULE OF NEXT MEETING - The next board meeting will be held Saturday, September 8, 2007, at the Department of Human Services, Donaghey Plaza South Building, First Floor, Conference Room A at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Irma Nelson
Secretary